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ABSTRACT

This publication describes the systems that prepare secondary school teachers in five randomly selected countries: England, Wales, France, Germany, and The Netherlands. The most common theme among these teacher education programs is that the systems are in a constant state of change; the changes come mostly as nations try to adapt the ways they prepare their teachers for all kinds of new socioeconomic and political realities. This report presents an overview of the way these countries structure the education and training of secondary school teachers and illustrates some elements of change in the systems. Each description is followed by some commentary on recent changes in that system and by general remarks about several key developments getting under way. The paper concludes with a discussion of new realities teachers are confronted with on a daily basis. (Contains 21 references.) (LL)

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Teacher Training Abroad: New Realities

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Teacher Training Abroad: New Realities

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Teacher Preparation Systems and Recent Developments in England and Wales, France, Germany, and The Netherlands

Introduction

The interest in school reform that developed throughout the United States in the 1980s produced a serious interest in the education systems of other nations. Two trends in particular piqued the attention of concerned citizens, educators, and policymakers: 1) a growing awareness of the increasing economic competition among nations; and 2) the undercompetitive performance of American students compared to their counterparts from other countries. The challenge of remaining competitive brought to the forefront the related issues of the teaching and learning of students from other nations who excel in subjects like mathematics and science.

Among the many factors that affect students' educational attainment, teachers are of course key. The systems that educate them and train them to teach are crucial. The descriptions of the systems that prepare secondary school teachers in five countries that are offered here are necessarily very brief. Each of these systems is complex, with unique characteristics, and each is rooted in an extended structure, making the systems difficult to summarize. But due to the growing circulation of information among nations, and the renewed focus on how nations prepare their teachers, we recognize that the most common theme among many nations' teacher education and training systems is that they are in a constant state of change.

The changes come mostly as nations try to adapt the ways they prepare their teachers to all kinds of new socioeconomic and political realities. We know we cannot import wholesale the solutions and changes from other nations, for ours is itself a unique system, and any changes must be developed gradually, and tested along the way. But also recognizing that we can learn from others' experience, we have chosen five nations at random to describe briefly their teacher preparation systems for secondary teachers, and to illustrate some elements of change in those systems. We hope thereby to further the general awareness, as we face new realities here in the United States, that a system that prepares teachers must be dynamic.

This report's overview of the way these countries structure the education and training of teachers is limited to secondary school teachers. This is done for reasons of clarity and simplicity. Each description is followed by commentary on some recent changes in that system. Finally, the report makes some general remarks about several key developments getting under way.

England and Wales

Program of Teacher Preparation

The maintained (public) and private secondary schools in England and Wales teach students aged 12–19. Those who want to teach in secondary school can be prepared in a variety of ways. Unlike some other countries, there are no age limits for admission to teacher training courses. The conventional way to enter the teaching field is through a course of training approved by the Secretary for Education. It is called Initial Teacher Training (ITT). The minimum requirement is that entrants to an ITT have a C or better in both English and mathematics in the General Certificate of Secondary Education, or in an equivalent qualification.

Admission to an ITT is the responsibility of the institution providing the program. There are two tracks: 1) Three- or 4-year undergraduate programs of courses leading to the Bachelor of Education degree (BEd.), or a Bachelor of Arts (BA), or a Bachelor of Science (BSc), and a Qualified Teacher Status (QTS); 2) A 1-year postgraduate program of courses in teaching and educational methods and assessment leading to the Postgraduate Certificate of Education (PGCE).

Three-quarters of all students who want to teach in secondary school take the PGCE track. This program requires a university degree or one of the recognized equivalents, and a passing grade in English and in mathematics.

Academically, teacher trainees take at least 2 years of courses devoted to the subjects taught at their relevant school level. Practically, they must complete a minimum of 24 weeks (in a postgraduate course) and 32 weeks (in an undergraduate course) of practical training in school experience and teaching. Secondary school teaching students must be prepared to teach two subjects. Students must also take courses about the physical and emotional characteristics and growth stages of the students they will teach.

There are other course routes: Candidates with some higher education credits can take a shortened 2-year program of undergraduate courses, and graduates with degrees that are only partly related to their subject specialty can take a 2-year program of extended postgraduate conversion courses. Students 24 and older can pursue the "licensed teacher" route. The certification comes through a 4-year program of courses at universities or equivalent institutions that leads to a degree other than the B Ed., or to teacher certification in some form. Licensed teachers must have fulfilled the standard English and mathematics requirements

and have finished 2 years of higher education. With provisional status, the person teaches 1 to 3 years before being awarded "qualified teacher status" by the local education authority.

Experienced, trained teachers with a degree who come from countries outside the European Economic Community can gain QTS by serving as an Overseas Trained Teacher.

Recent Developments

The 1987 Education Reform Act has changed the way England and Wales manage their educational systems. The major feature of the act has been decentralization of education authority, accomplished in large part by decentralizing the distribution of finances. This has been accompanied by a strong emphasis on the local management of schools. Another effect of the act is that the newly renamed Department for Education is trying to expand the number of students who stay in upper secondary school and of those who go on to higher education institutions. One apparent cause of this policy is a desire to upgrade the skills students will need in the work force, especially the higher order skills increasingly called for in today's more sophisticated work sites. The resulting expansion of the student population does not yet seem to have resulted in a serious shortage of teachers.

The advent of a more school-centered system has had its reverberations in teacher training: increased cooperation between schools and teacher training programs means that many trainees will spend a much greater percentage of their time in schools as a way of relating their training to real-life school situations and learning.

There is also a major effort to focus teacher training on the requirements of a national curriculum. This curriculum, a controversial effort to impose regularity and instill challenge in what the schools teach, has been promoted by the Reform Act. It has three core subjects (mathematics, science, and English) and seven other academic subjects. It is further defined by 10 stages, each corresponding to students' chronological age. Specific achievement goals are tied to specific subject areas. Teacher training institutions must incorporate these goals into the overall goals of the training they provide, so that new teachers will be prepared to teach the national curriculum subjects.

The ethnic and cultural diversity of the student population is expanding, and mainstreaming of students with special needs is becoming a more frequent practice throughout the system. Consequently, all teacher training programs must

emphasize teacher competencies in identifying and dealing with learning and behavioral differences and problems, and include instruction on aspects of special education, gender, ethnic minority, and related social and instructional issues.

The increased authority of the local school districts gained through the Reform Act has had at least two other effects on teacher education and training. Governmental authorities are working with teacher training institutions to create alternative routes to teacher certification. They are also developing ways to stimulate teacher training applications from nontraditional sources.

France

Program of Teacher Preparation

Secondary schools in France are the *collège* (ages 11–15) and the *lycée* (ages 15–18). There are two types of *lycées*: the *lycée d'enseignement professionnel* for practical and theoretical vocational education, which awards the 2-year *brevet* or the 3-year *certificat*, and the *lycée*, which awards the *baccalauréat*—the prerequisite for entry into higher education.

The two levels of secondary school teachers correspond to the two secondary school levels. The lower level teachers, called *professeurs d'enseignement général de collège*, are selected by their teacher education program after completing 2 years of higher education and then are given 2 years of training, usually in centers attached to some of the primary teacher training institutions. They will eventually teach two subjects, a "major" and a "minor," and are trained accordingly. Since 1986, the universities have been taking a greater part in teaching them this subject matter.

The upper secondary level teachers are divided into two categories according to their degrees. *Professeurs certifiés* hold one of the following certificates: in arts and sciences, CAPES (*Certificat d'Aptitude au Professorat de l'Enseignement du Second Degré*); in technical education, CAPET (*Certificat d'Aptitude au Professorat de l'Enseignement Technique*); and in physical education, CAPEPS (*Certificat d'Aptitude Professionnelle de l'Education Physique et Sportive*). *Professeurs agrégés* hold the *agrégation* certificate (degree). Upper secondary level teachers must be prepared to teach a "major" and a "minor" subject.

Candidates for teacher training are chosen by a system of competitive examinations, the *concours*. All candidates must be French, have a *baccalauréat* degree, and have at least 2 years of higher education. *Professeurs certifiés* must pass the CAPES exam (oral and written) open to those holding a *licence* in the subject to be taught (awarded after 3 years at the university). *Professeurs agrégés* must pass the exam called the *agrégation*, which is open only to those who have a 4-year university degree, the *maîtrise*. Most students taking either exam take a year-long prep course first.

Students chosen for teacher training attend a 1-year university course. Then they spend a year in teacher training at regional education centers; a passing grade leads to a permanent appointment called *certification*. *Professeurs certifiés* and *agrégés* can teach at either the lower secondary level or in the first 2 years of the higher level. There are also *professeurs de collège d'enseignement technique* (voca-

tional education teachers) who, after 2 years in either a general or technical higher education program, take 2 years of training at one of the national technical teacher training schools.

Due to a shortage of mathematics, engineering, and science teachers, France uses a system of financial aid to attract qualified candidates.

Recent Developments

A major development in France has been the recent establishment of the *Instituts Universitaires de Formation des Maîtres*, the IUFM, which are teacher training institutes within universities. This systemwide change has placed the responsibility for teacher training squarely in the laps of the universities. At the *Instituts*, both theoretical and practical work are included in teacher education and training. The *Instituts* have also become heavily involved in recruitment, since teacher shortages have become more pronounced throughout France. They have come under attack from the traditional providers of teacher training for being too unfocused, and they are finding it difficult to establish a workable balance between the theoretical and the practical aspects of the preparation they provide.

Another major development is that the French government has expanded its education budget. Prompted in part by calls for greater numbers of graduates with higher order thinking and problem-solving skills, as befits an increasingly sophisticated job market, the government has set very high goals for expanding upper secondary level enrollment and graduation. Although the original goal was closer to 90%, the goal now is to enroll 80% of the "relevant age cohort" as upper secondary school students who will pass the *baccalauréat*, traditionally considered a daunting examination. At present, 55% of the relevant age cohort receive it. As a result of the new goal, enrollment has increased and more teachers are needed. Due to larger classes, schools and teacher skills are strained, and more inservice training has become necessary.

Germany

Program of Teacher Preparation

The basic structure of schooling in Germany includes the *Hauptschule* (ages 10–15/16); the vocationally oriented *Realschule* (ages 10–16), the more comprehensive *Gesamtschule* (ages 10–16, 10–19); and the university-preparatory *Gymnasium* (ages 10–19).

Teacher training depends in part on the decisions of the individual states. Four states train teachers to meet the particular requirements of each type of school. Training there for the *Hauptschule* is distinct from that for the *Realschule* and *Gymnasium*. Now a change is under way. The other 10 states have developed their training based on age groups: the *Grundstufe* (ages 6–9), *Mittelstufe* (ages 10–15), and *Oberstufe* (ages 15 and over.)

All teaching candidates must have an *Abitur* (higher secondary education certificate) or designated equivalent, or must pass a university entrance examination. The one exception to this requirement is the supervisor of apprentice training, who is based in business and industry and needs no formal equivalency.

Training is divided into two parts. The first involves academic and/or artistic studies at an institution of higher education, namely, a university, teacher training college, education college, a school of art or music, or a comprehensive university. The second is a period of practical training in the classroom and in school activities.

The individual state decides just how long the candidate studies; the general range is a minimum of 6 to 8 semesters. From 8 to 10 semesters are required for anyone planning to teach at a *Gymnasium* or at vocational or special education schools. Students study educational theory and practice, psychology, philosophy, teaching methods, and at least two academic subjects in depth. The degree course concludes with the first state examination, the *Erste Staatsprüfung*, which includes a thesis and an oral and written examination.

A certificate is awarded upon receipt of a passing grade. Then begins a period of preparatory service, which consists mostly of practical training in the classroom and school lasting 18-24 months. It emphasizes preparing, teaching, and evaluating lessons; working as a team member; and learning the rights and responsibilities of a teacher. A second state examination follows. It includes an oral and written examination, as well as teaching two lessons. Those who succeed are granted a teaching credential, the *Zweite Staatsprüfung*.

Recent Developments

Germany has recently been faced with discord arising in part from the unification with East Germany, but even more from some relatively longstanding social tensions. These derive principally from the arrival over the past 10–15 years of large numbers of very diverse immigrant populations, including large numbers of asylum-seekers, all hoping to find work in an economically strong country. Their complaints of being treated as an underclass, their demands for parity, and their linguistic diffusion have underscored their differences with the native population. The schools have absorbed these new populations in a relatively short period of time. The experience has not been trouble free.

Given the fact that teachers are civil servants, their job has traditionally been seen as that of accepting and implementing an established order. Teachers were generally expected to have at their disposal the necessary skills for handling their classrooms. However, these are new classrooms, with many different kinds of challenges, problems, and opportunities. Many activists in the ranks of teachers have expressed doubts that the authority and practicability of the established ways of teaching, schooling, and teacher training are working well.

One response to this linguistic and cultural diversity has been to develop new training programs at the state (*Länder*) level, but these programs tend to be of brief duration, and are considered haphazard because they do not seem clearly connected to in-school behavior.

In the cities, there have been some loud expressions of decreased confidence in the way urban schools have handled the new social realities, and teacher training institutions are being called upon to develop in their trainees a new capacity for creating and maintaining classroom productivity and an environment that is stable, nourishing, and challenging.

Teacher surpluses are turning into substantial shortages throughout Germany. Though entry into teaching has been discouraged, it is believed that, as early as 1995, there will not be enough teachers to staff the schools, a dramatic change in only 10 years. It is not yet clear how the shortages will be met. In fact, the new union of the former East Germany and West Germany has delayed the development of many specific reforms, including some that are being called for in the state systems of teacher preparation.

The Netherlands

Program of Teacher Preparation

The secondary school referred to as the MAVO (*Middlebaar Algemeen Voortgezet Onderwijs*) teaches children aged 12–16; the school called the HAVO (*Hoger Algemeen Voortgezet Onderqijs*) teaches children aged 12–17, and the highest level upper secondary school, the VWO (*Voorbereidend Wetenschappelijk Onderwijs*) teaches children aged 12–18. The schools select students according to ability. The MAVO provides junior general secondary education. The HAVO offers senior general secondary education, and provides access to higher professional education. Most selective is the VWO, which provides direct access to the universities of The Netherlands.

Four different routes are available in The Netherlands by which students can prepare for teaching in secondary schools. These are: secondary teacher training institutions; secondary teacher certificate courses, which are basically the same as the former, but are completed on a part-time basis; the Dutch association for training vocational education teachers; and sports academies, which train physical educators.

Not all secondary school teachers are qualified to teach at all levels. Qualification levels or grades roughly parallel the age levels of the pupils taught. Teachers with a first qualification grade (*1e graads leraar*) can teach at all levels, in both secondary and higher education. All others (*2e graads leraar*) are qualified to teach only in a limited sector of the secondary school system.

The usual teacher training program, whether for first, second, or third grade level of qualification, takes 4 years to complete, and includes both academic courses and practical training. The sports academies train for the first qualification level; institutions offering part-time programs train for both the first and second levels; secondary teacher training (full-time) institutions train for the second level and provide a double certificate at the end, reflecting training in two subjects. Vocational training, which includes both theoretical work and relevant practical training, requires the student to spend time in industry.

An entrant into a lower secondary school teacher preparation program must have either a final upper secondary school degree or completed 3 years of technical/vocational education. An entrant into an upper secondary school teacher preparation program must graduate from the VWO, the highest secondary school level, then attend a university for 4 years for academic courses and practical teacher training.

Recent Developments

The overall move in the education system since the early 1980s has been toward decentralization. The full effect of decentralization is not yet clear. Block funding of schools is increasing, and schools have more flexibility and authority. More money is going to schools serving the disadvantaged, culturally diverse populations, urban areas, and schools with poorer overall results. Increasingly, money is being tied to achieving better academic results. Those results, and schools' activities and experiments, are of interest to such bodies as the National Institute for Curriculum Development and the National Institute of Educational Research. (The teacher training institutes in The Netherlands, incidentally, have no research mission of their own, nor the capacity to fulfill one.)

Decentralization puts increased emphasis on individual schools to guide and assess their own performance, and to be assessed; the increased social and academic complexity of the schools underscores a move to lengthen teacher training programs for teachers at all levels. An increasing interest in higher academic skills for greater numbers of secondary school students helps explain why training for teaching at the upper level of secondary school has become a function of the universities' teacher training departments. All other teacher training institutions have been fused with higher vocational education institutes to form a larger, comprehensive school system.

There is general sentiment in The Netherlands to loosen teacher training qualifications and improve salaries and working conditions for teachers. There is concern about the relationships between the teacher training institutes and their communities. Student practice teaching has become increasingly important, as has inservice education dealing with such issues as teachers' ability to provide student guidance, and strengthening the support system for beginning teachers.

New Realities

Whenever there are new social expectations or social problems, teachers are among the first to confront them on a daily basis. The responsibility for dealing with the consequences of a new problem or a new expectation will often fall upon the teachers, so the teacher preparation system in any country must be constantly prepared to accommodate change as a natural response.

The countries reviewed here have been changing their teacher preparation systems in very different ways to adapt to new realities. In one case, the reality is a new policy to increase secondary school completion as a way of improving the quality of the work force and of increasing the use of higher order skills. In another, culturally and linguistically diverse populations have arrived in such numbers as to create some social unrest that must in part be dealt with in the schools.

The increasingly heterogeneous classrooms in the five countries reviewed require teachers with different kinds and levels of skills, and the teacher training systems are in the midst of trying to require and provide them. A general response is to increase the minimum number of years of training for certification, and to favor teacher training that puts practice alongside theory, if not before it. While one country moves its teacher training system into the universities, resulting in a heated debate on the proper balance between the theoretical and the practical in training contemporary teachers, another country moves its training system much closer to the daily realities of the schools.

Any country that institutes changes in its teacher preparation system usually does so in response to long-term views of its own social realities. Changes noted here in the structure and content of teacher education and training systems illustrate just a few structural ways of responding to new social realities. The changes, being structural, tend to be indirect interventions, and thus the outcomes are very difficult to measure.

It is generally true, however, that changes such as these affect mostly the beginning and new teachers, who in their own recent professional preparation have been directly exposed to the new requirements. Even so, the traditional role of the teacher trainer, usually fashioned after the apprenticeship model, with an emphasis on applying everything to practice every day, is usually not a strong one, and many of the more direct effects of these changes can tend to dissipate unless embodied in practice. There is not yet in place in any of the countries reviewed an extensive or intensive inservice system designed to help teachers develop new

or better skills needed, for example, in dealing with an increasingly diversified student body and all the cultural and linguistic differences of new populations. Although the move back to the schools is one way to give teacher trainees the best kind of inservice training, it will still take time to make significant changes on a broad scale. It takes time for any country to catch up with its new realities.

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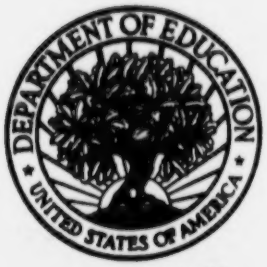

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